

**Neighbourly Committee No 4**  
Incorporating Neighbourhood Forum No 4  
Executive Committee  
Co-Convenors: Bradley Chapman and Paul Evans  
Secretary: Brad Chapman  
Acting Treasurer: Paul Evans  
Contact: Convenor– bradleyc@ozemail.com.au



**NF4 Tuesday, September 3rd, 2024, General Meeting:  
In Person Meeting @ Towradgi Community Hall**

**NF4 Sept 3 Zoom Link**

Time: Sep 3, 2024 07:00 PM

**Join Zoom Meeting**

<https://uca-nswact.zoom.us/j/98250797199?pwd=jTWUf0GO3jKr48d3E4czChnLxZRGs3.1>

**Meeting ID: 982 5079 7199**

**Passcode: 240707**

*• Please be aware that NF4's Zoom Protocol Policy expects that attendees will have their Camera and Microphone turned ON to show they are participating in the meeting with respect for physical attendees in the room. The chairpersons will make every effort to recognise online requests to speak in accordance with established meeting etiquette.*

**MINUTES**

**Open Meeting-** 07.00pm

**Apologies** – Anne Marrett, Sam Tannous, Jim Middleton, Cr Walters, Cr R. Martin, Jean Groves.

**Minutes of Previous Meeting 2 July 2024** - Previously Distributed via email

**Business Arising from Minutes -**

**Current DAs:**

**DA-2024/593 - Development Application - 2/39A and 8/39A Angel Street CORRIMAL NSW 2518** - 3 Sept - Residential - Proposed Terrace Addition to Unit 8 and Unit 2 Verandah Under

**DA-2024/606 - Development Application - 49 Dobbie Avenue EAST CORRIMAL NSW 2518** - 5 Sept - Residential - demolition of existing outbuilding, tree removal and construction of secondary dwelling

**DA-2024/615 - Development Application - 27 Wallace Road FERNHILL NSW 2519** - 6 Sept - Residential - dual occupancy

**DA-2024/611 - Development Application - 68 Wilga Street CORRIMAL NSW 2518** - 6 Sept - Residential - demolition of existing dwelling, tree removal and construction of dwelling with attached garage

**DA-2023/654/A - Modification of Development Application - 91-97 Princes Highway FAIRY MEADOW NSW 2519** - 9 Sept - Demolition of existing structures and construction of a vehicle service centre with ancillary office area, vehicle showroom, car wash bay, ancillary structures, signage and lot consolidation Modification A - minor amendments to internal floorplan, façade, awning, signage and carpark layout [**Old Indoor Cricket Lot**]

**DA-2024/562 - Development Application - 64 Cabbage Tree Lane FAIRY MEADOW NSW 2519** - 11 Sept - Residential - stabilise creek bank by heightening and extending existing gabion retaining wall, earthworks and removal of construction debris

[Continued]

DA-2024/604 - Development Application - Towradgi Park Towradgi Road TOWRADGI NSW 2518 - 2 Oct -

Demolition of the existing basalt gabion basket erosion protection system and reconstructing scour protection with a new basalt armour rock revetment - Notification period extended due to additional Integrated Development requirements triggered.

Items noted. DA2023/654/A was mentioned as 'In Support' as it is the former Indoor Cricket Centre and the community is pleased that it is now being reused for a worthwhile purpose.

• **Correspondence In** –

Sophie McCrae at Engagement - WCC - Advice of TfNSW Projects with funding for '*Safer Connections Around Train Stations*'. Corrimal Station is included, and feedback is being sought until 25th September through Libraries and usual contact methods.

• **Correspondence Out** – None.

**Community Campaigns:**

• **Corrimal Community Action Group**

– AGM 14<sup>th</sup> August Corr RSL. Presentation by David Winterbottom, NF5.

[Attached Address Summary]

Well-attended meeting and David's address was very interesting as he is a former town planner here in the City of Wollongong. He shared a great deal about the historical process of guiding planning decisions within the city and NF5's perspectives on the T.O.D.

– Executive Meeting with Paul Scully MP regarding the T.O.D. issues raised by CCAG. 30min meeting where some issues were not addressed but the Minister agreed to receive them in writing and *endeavour* to provide a response.

Highlights of the discussion:

1. The 400m radius around identified stations are not strict and will be adjusted at the edges as required. Any intersected property is included. See attached T.O.D. map provided by D.P.I.
2. RE Coke Works - T.O.D. *doesn't* override the initial rezoning to extend R3 zones. The T.O.D. doesn't apply to heritage conservation zones. [NB. *This is currently being investigated by the Legacy team*]
3. No development can be refused on basis of height if within the 6-storey limit.
4. Only 2% affordable housing required in any development under the current T.O.D. Scully said this will (may?) increase over time.
5. Tranche 2 – [Scully seemed unsure what term Tranche 2 was referring to.] The radius around Town Centres has not been decided and no decision has been made except allowing dual occupancy in R2 zones.
6. Flooding – Wollongong has around 80km of privately owned stormwater pipes and drains resulting in failure of many unmaintained systems. Developments will **have to have** stormwater treatment systems on site to avoid exacerbating flooding. [NFs and residents will have to be vigilant on this...] The new NSW Disaster Mitigation Plan will guide adaptation to flooding and stormwater management. The NSW government is working with insurers to bring about changes in policy to end classification of properties by catchment and fine tune to local conditions.
7. Transport – Train services get adjusted when there is the population to warrant it.

A train timetable review is being done. [*This is an argument presented by the supporters of the residential upscaling plans, "Build it and they will come..." however, Northern Suburbs residents have long standing, challenged feelings about the willingness of governments to provide relief to local transport needs.*]

Bus services are being reviewed now – last review was 10 years ago.

Transport planning is done by TfNSW, not Dept of Planning.

Scully stressed they are aware that there is increasing demand for travel East /West rather than North /South, for which the train does not cater.

[*Items in italics provided by Chairperson from meeting discussion.*]

• **East Corrimal Open Space Committee** –

- Members of the Committee were in attendance to discuss directly with a concerned resident the background to the management of Happy Valley Park in Dobbie Ave. Continued discussion of possible options for positioning of public toilets to serve the full East Corrimal Beach, Bellambi Lagoon precinct and why it was never considered viable to be placed in this park.
- Historical aspects to the existence of the park and attempts to manage it.
- Local residents were nervous of ad-hoc pressure due to significant overuse by visitors from much further afield than the local area.
- Their prime desire was a safe, useable play space for local children as a ‘Designated Local Park’ under Council’s Parks Policy. ***This process received glowing support from Council when established.***

**Build our Bridge Committee**

[ **NF4, NF5, Illawarra Bike Users Group, Healthy Cities Illawarra, Keiraville Residents' Action Group**]

- No current update on developments.

**General Business:**

•• ***Special Minute*** –

***Neighbourhood Forum 4 wished to acknowledge the service of Cr. Cameron Walters to Ward 1 during the life of the outgoing Council. We share the disappointment in the circumstances that have prevented him from offering himself for re-election to the new term of Council. We will miss his considered input.***

***We would like to thank both Cr Richard Martin and Cr Walters for making the time to attend, where possible, most meetings of NF4 during the last Council term, and for offering practical and meaningful support to the concerns of local residents, and their respect of the non-partisan political and issue-focused nature of NF4's gatherings. We hope that, on resumption of Council Business, our new councillors will positively consider maintaining regular participation with our forum.***

- Discussion of use of community land for commercial purposes. [Dobbie Ave]
  - Highlighted the need for interested parties adjoining Happy Valley Park to make an agreed submission which can then be presented to the new Council after the election period. NF4 will support such a submission as a committee of local residents. Reminded the meeting that submissions should be made by each

interested party, *in your own personal wording*. You do not have to be a master of 'professional wording'. Petitions and Forum submissions are only counted as *one communication*. So many individual submissions is always better for being considered.

- Highlighted the example of Streets Park near Blue Divers Bridge, where play equipment and toilets were removed by Council because of 'anti-social' misuse. Play equipment now fortunately restored, but toilets?
- Convenors met with Legacy Properties to better understand the arrangements for the 1<sup>st</sup> Stage of The Works Development. Request has been made for a presentation at NF4. We are keen to facilitate such an event at a suitable meeting date.
- Discussions about proposed Murray Rd upgrade [ now available on the TfNSW and WCC websites for Public Comment as the Safety Upgrades around Railway Stations. Corrimal is included with two targets of works in Railway Street and Murray Rd.]

Meeting closed with thanks for all in attendance at 8:45pm.

Neighbourly Forum 4 meets the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of the month at Towradgi Community Hall, Corner of Moray Road and Towradgi Road Towradgi at 7pm.

\*\*\*\* All Welcome - No Cost \*\*\*\*

# Transport Oriented Development, Corrimal

Notes from Address by David Winterbottom, NF5. - CCAG AGM 18 July 2024

I understand you have met with Paul Scully so I assume you have a general idea of what is proposed. Please note that I am not an architect and do not claim to be an expert in this field as I do not have to deal with it on a day-to-day basis. Moreover, I have simplified the provisions somewhat without detracting from the overall implications of the proposal.

## Aims

The aims of the policy are as follows—

- (a) to increase housing density within 400m of existing and planned public transport,
- (b) to deliver mid-rise residential flat buildings and shop top housing around rail and metro stations that—
  - (i) are well designed, and
  - (ii) are of appropriate bulk and scale, and
  - (iii) provide amenity and liveability,
- c) to encourage the development of affordable housing to meet the needs of essential workers and vulnerable members of the community.

## Context

State and Commonwealth Government have failed miserably to address the question of housing availability. Instead of increasing the delivery of public housing they have decreased supply and sold off much that they had and then wring their hands about the lack of affordable housing. They have introduced fees and charges in housing, allowed negative gearing, failed to tax vacant properties, and not promoted alternative community housing options common in Europe. There are also issues with enough building tradespeople not helped by ongoing cuts to TAFE. When all else fails, blame the planning system even though there is no way it can ever deliver.

## Assumptions about Transit Oriented Development

It is assumed that the reason for selecting rail stations is so that more people will walk or bike to the station thereby reducing overall travel effort and specifically, reduce carbon emissions

There does not appear to have been any research into:

- (a) whether 400 metres, or any other distance, is critical;
- (b) the propensity to use rail depending on nearness to a station;
- (c) the priority people living in medium density give to living in proximity to a noisy railway line or to a town centre, or to a major open space, a good school for their kids, or to the stadium of their favourite sport.

So, encouraging medium/high density development near railway stations is certainly not the only, and might not be the best strategy. City Centre Oriented Development might be a far more rational and effective strategy. Reducing density in areas remote from services or close to vulnerable areas like the escarpment might also steer development in the right direction.

## Assumptions about housing delivery

There is an assumption that by increasing the floorspace ratio will suddenly result in developers taking advantage and building. However, the critical restraint on redevelopment is lot width and it not proposed to change this. Much of the land around the Corrimal proposal has a very significant

admixture of medium density housing already. To take advantage of the new proposals will mean that developers have to amalgamate lots to get the minimum site width.

Experience suggests this is very hard to do and nearly impossible if a site is already developed for medium density.

It is very uncertain that the bonus provisions will actually result in an increase in supply or merely shift supply from elsewhere. Also, the cost per square metre is higher for 5-6 storey buildings promulgated, partly because they need to have lifts, rather than those currently allowable.

### **Assumptions about Good Design**

There is an assumption that the resulting development will be well designed. Unfortunately, the only requirement is that “Development consent must not be granted .... unless the consent authority has considered the “Apartment Design Guide.” which is about as feeble a control as can be imagined. Council’s specific controls on overlooking, overshadowing, setbacks, streetscape character and deep planting are not criteria.

Quite apart from the lack of detail allowing developers to claim that, of course, theirs is the best design going, the permitting of a 22m or 24m building height where the current limit is 16m and virtually all existing development is under 9m will lead to an unfortunate juxtaposition of building which are anything but appropriate in bulk and scale.

There is also the question of strategic urban design if, instead of the town centre signalling itself with the highest buildings and the most intense development this is confused by higher development near the railway station.

### **Affordable Housing**

The policy requires a mandatory 2% affordable housing contribution for buildings with a minimum gross floor area of 2,000 sqm, to be delivered onsite and in perpetuity. In return it allows increases in both floorspace and height of up to 30%. However, a parallel State diktat also endeavours to increase the supply of affordable housing without actually having to subsidise it. In addition to any benefits from a Transit Oriented Development, the new In-fill Affordable Housing legislation, which applies to land within 800metres of a centre, allows sliding scale increases in both floorspace and height of up to 30% if 15% of the dwellings are made available to an accredited Community Housing Provider and retained as such for at least 15 years. That implies that all the purchasers of the other dwellings will have to pay for them. This will raise the overall cost of housing, creating an even greater need for affordable housing.

### **Issues with Current Controls**

The fundamental problems with the current controls revolve around lot width and density. Most medium density dwellings can only be on lots wider than 18m. However residential flats need a 24m wide. The problem is that most lots near centres (and railway stations) are standard narrow 50 foot (13.7metre) wide but many of those on periphery (such as near the escarpment) are wider. So that is where the more intense development is being attracted.

Significant areas of the city comprise almost exclusively single-family houses.

Generally speaking, these are remote from centres and permanent transport routes. In these areas medium density development and non-residential uses should only be developed to a scale, density and intensity of use of the immediate area regardless of dwelling type.

This used to be the case but changed some 10-15 years ago when the then new Local Environmental Plan “rationalised” densities irrespective of dwelling type. Now the State Policy is such that reducing densities anywhere is a no no.

The only element of restraint is a requirement to respect the character of the street and neighbourhood which even the State Government supports. However, the only place where character statements are set out in in the Development Control Plan and these are so vague any architect can claim conformity.

However, there are many examples of quite acceptable medium density developments on lots narrower than 18 metres and there used to be a sliding scale provision that linked density more closely to lot width provided setbacks and other criteria were met.

### **Neighbourhood Forums’ proposals**

Two years ago, in response to a draft Housing Strategy, Wollongong Neighbourhood Forums proposed that:

- 1 there be an immediate review of the Suburb Character Statements, in association with the communities, not least to ensure that new development in streets dominated by houses looked like a house on its own lot;
- 2 a sliding scale reduction in lot width be permitted in line with reduced densities;
- 3 increased densities be permitted in areas surrounding town centres suggestions of which were made prior to workshops with the communities.

For Corrimal, the areas suggested were north and east of the centre where there is already considerable medium density infill. Much to the west is already zoned medium density.

Unfortunately, whilst review of Character Statements got into the Strategy, nothing has happened about them. Whilst the strategy does call for a review of housing near centres there is little evidence of changing density provisions elsewhere.

### **Conclusions**

It looks to me to be a total disaster creating huge uncertainties for the development industry and quite unnecessary angst for the community. Even if it could be made to work, I doubt that it would have a significant impact on housing supply.

On the one hand they give enormous height and fsr bonuses for areas they have no idea about. They then say Council must consider the Apartment Design Guide (and the yet to be developed Design Competition Guidelines!). Strictly applied there is no way most of the areas would allow the proposed development, so developers couldn't have a clue what they can get away with nor, if they didn't, what the poor old Land and Environment Court might decide.

Given the uncertainties, I suspect that the impact will be limited – severe in a couple of places but most places will escape relatively unscathed. Nevertheless, it might be possible to turn things to advantage. If the Minister can be persuaded that rather than concentrating even more development around Corrimal Station but, instead look at areas close to Corrimal centre. Then more people would be far closer to shops, restaurants and banks, medical, legal and a whole range of other services. Moreover, the area is well serviced by buses and not that far from the railway station. However, the problem of lot width will remain.

Next, he should be persuaded that the Apartment Design Guidelines are all well and good but so open ended that architects can easily claim their designs comply. It would be much better to require also conformity to those elements of Council’s Local Environmental and Development Control Plans which

are not specifically identified in the new legislation, such as setbacks, daylight and overshadowing. An ongoing problem is that most people consider the most important aspect is overlooking and it is almost impossible to define this unless it is blatant.

It should be noted that Kuring-Gai Council are challenging the validity of the legislation in the Land and Environment Court although this seems to be on procedural issues which usually can be fixed quite easily.

Finally, as I said at the beginning, I am not an architect and do not deal with these issues on a day-to-day basis so it might be wise to seek the advice of a friendly architect before proceeding.





